

IMPORTANT NOTICE

PAPER FOOD STAMP COUPONS ARE SET TO EXPIRE

Although EBT cards have been used to deliver Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly Food Stamp Program) benefits to recipients for several years, some recipients may have a few paper food stamp coupons left. As you know, you are required to accept paper food stamp coupons from recipients. However, the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, has set an expiration date for paper food stamp coupons.

After June 17, 2009, recipients will no longer be able to use paper food stamp coupons and your store will no longer be required to accept them. If you have, or receive, paper food stamp coupons between now and June 17, 2009, you must redeem them at your bank or make a claim at your local Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Field Office.

Retail store owners like you must submit all paper food stamp coupons for redemption by July 17, 2009. After close of business on that date, paper food stamp coupons will no longer have value and cannot be redeemed.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACCEPTING PAPER FOOD STAMP COUPONS

The Food Stamp Program regulations prohibit retail food stores from accepting loose \$5 and \$10 paper food coupons which have been removed from the coupon books prior to the time of purchase.

The purple \$5 and green \$10 food stamp coupons must be presented along with the book cover which bears the same serial number as the coupons.

The food stamp coupons may be loose as long as the customer has the cover with the same serial number as the coupons, and the coupons have not been cancelled or endorsed by another retailer.

Retailers may provide cash change of up to (but not exceeding) \$0.99 cents in a paper food stamp coupon transaction. This is only allowed in a paper food stamp coupon transaction; it is NOT allowed in EBT transactions.

Example of a paper food stamp coupon transaction involving change:

- Purchase amount is \$ 1.56
- Client presents two \$1.00 paper food stamp coupons
- Cash change of \$0.44 cents may be provided.

At this time, retail food stores are directed not to provide recipients food stamp coupons as change in paper coupon transactions.

Instead of providing food stamp coupons as change, retailers can ask food stamp customers to do the following:

(1) Pay cash to make up the difference in price (e.g. \$6.00 purchase may be paid for with a \$5.00 food stamp coupon and \$1.00 in cash rather than paid for with a \$10.00 coupon that would require food stamp coupon change); or

(2) Buy more food items up to the amount of paper food coupons presented by the customer.

If neither of these options works, you may refuse the sale.

If you have any questions about accepting paper food stamp coupons, visit our website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/> or call our helpline at 1-877-823-4369 and you will be directed to an FNS representative who can answer your questions.